

Lamberton Water Tower
Birch Street
City of Lamberton
Redwood County
Minnesota

HAER No. MN-60

HAER
MINN
64-LAMTO,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

LAMBERTON WATER TOWER

HAER No. MN-60

HAER
MINN
64-LAMTQ
2-

I. OVERVIEW

LOCATION: BIRCH STREET
LAMBERTON, MINNESOTA

LEGAL: BLOCK 12
LAMBERTON & SYKES SECOND ADDITION
LAMBERTON, MINNESOTA

QUAD: LAMBERTON

UTM: 15.319400.4899550

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1905 & 1906 (REPLACED ORIGINAL TOWER)

PRESENT OWNER: CITY OF LAMBERTON
112 W 2ND AVENUE
LAMBERTON, MINNESOTA

PRESENT USE: NO LONGER USED FOR THE WATER SUPPLY
AND STORAGE FOR THE CITY OF LAMBERTON.
THE TOWER HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A
STEEL SINGLE-PEDESTAL TOWER.
PROJECTED DATE FOR REMOVAL IS JUNE
OF 1994.

SIGNIFICANCE: THE LAMBERTON WATER TOWER IS A TURN
OF THE CENTURY STEEL TOWER.

HISTORIAN: PASTOR LEE R. HARDER
LAMBERTON, MINNESOTA

II. INTRODUCTION

WITH THE COMING OF THE CLOSING DECADES OF THE 1800's, MINNESOTA'S RURAL COMMUNITIES BEGAN TO EVOLVE BEYOND THE "LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE" EXISTENCE. THE 1880'S AND 1890'S SAW COMMUNITIES (TOWNS AND VILLAGES) VIEWING THEMSELVES AS CENTERS OF ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRED THE BASICS OF MUNICIPAL NECESSITIES, WHICH WOULD DEFINITELY INVOLVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF CITY WATERWORKS. THIS CAN BE SURMISED DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF WATERWORKS THAT WERE BUILT BETWEEN 1880 AND 1894, WHICH IS WHEN THE ORIGINAL WATERWORKS IN LAMBERTON WERE BUILT.¹ ONCE COMPLETED, THE WATERWORKS OF LAMBERTON WOULD PROVIDE A GROWING COMMUNITY WITH A DEPENDABLE, DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY.

III. THE DRILLING OF A WELL

ACCORDING TO THE EARLIEST COMMUNITY RECORDS, THE TALK OF GETTING A WELL DUG IN LAMBERTON TOOK PLACE AT THE VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING OF JULY 7, 1890 WHEN IT WAS RESOLVED TO DRILL A WELL ON LOTS 5 OR SIX OF BLOCK 1 IN THE VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON.² HOWEVER, NOTHING CAME FROM THIS INITIAL RESOLUTION AND NO WELL WAS DRILLED. SEVERAL YEARS PASSED UNTIL ON APRIL 3, 1893 A MOTION WAS MADE IN THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO

HAVE THE VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON GET A TUBULAR WELL BORED 2½ INCHES OR 3 INCHES IN DIAMETER WITH ADVERTIZING FOR BIDS TO BE MADE.³ YET, ON APRIL 19, 1893 WHEN THE BIDS WERE TO HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED, THE WHOLE BUSINESS OF THE WELL WAS POSTPONED UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING. ON MAY 4, 1893 THE VILLAGE COUNCIL ACCEPTED THE BID OF J.H. SCHAMBORG FOR BUILDING A CISTERN AND WELL WITH COMPLETION BY AUGUST 1, 1893.⁴ WHEN AUGUST CAME AND THE WORK WAS NOT COMPLETE, THE VILLAGE COUNCIL, ON AUGUST 19, 1893, FELT THE CONTRACT HAD BEEN BROKEN AND ORDERED THE GOOLER BROTHERS TO REMOVE THEIR MACHINERY AND VACATE.⁵ FINALLY, ON SEPTEMBER 12, 1893, A NEW CONTRACT WAS GIVEN TO HANSON AND NELSON OF LAMBERTON FOR DRILLING A 3 INCH TUBULAR WELL TO BE CASED WITH 3 INCH GALVINIZED PIPE AT \$1.25 PER FOOT.⁶

IV. BUILDING LAMBERTON'S WATERWORKS

ONCE THE QUESTION OF A WELL WAS SETTLED, THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TURNED THEIR ATTENTIONS TO THE WATERWORKS THAT WOULD BE CONNECTED TO IT. INITIALLY, A MOTION WAS APPROVED TO HAVE J.M. KINYON ERECT A WINDMILL, 60 FOOT TOWER AND A 12 FOOT CISTERN MILL BASED ON BIDS SUBMITTED. THE WELL WOULD NOW HAVE THE WATER RAISED 40 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND LEVEL AND PUMP 10 BARRELS OF WATER AN HOUR.⁷ YET, AS WITH THE DIGGING OF

AND OF THE WELL AND

THE WELL, COMPLICATIONS AROSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED NATURE AND THE ORIGINAL CONTRACTOR FAILED TO DO THE JOB. SO, ON MARCH 22, 1894, THE RECORDER OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL WAS ORDERED TO ADVERTISE IN THE LAMBERTON LEADER FOR SEALED BIDS FOR THE ERECTION OF A WINDMILL AND TOWER.⁸ AT A SPECIAL APRIL 16, 1894 MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL THE BID OF U.S. WIND ENGINE AND PUMP CO. OF BATAVIA, ILLINOIS WAS ACCEPTED. THEY WERE IN TURN AUTHORIZED TO FURNISH PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON WATERWORKS TOWER AND WINDMILL.⁹ STILL, PROBLEMS PERSISTED, THIS CONCERNING WHETHER OR NOT THE PRESENT WELL COULD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT WATER TO SATISFY THE COUNCIL WHICH FORCED THE VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON TO AGAIN REQUEST BIDS ON A NEW WATERWORKS SYSTEM NEGATING ALL PREVIOUS EFFORTS. AT ANOTHER MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL ON JUNE 20, 1894 BIDS WERE OPENED AND AGAIN U.S. WIND ENGINE AND PUMP CO. OF BATAVIA, ILLINOIS HAD THEIR BID ACCEPTED. THIS TIME A CONTRACT WAS MADE TO ERECT A COMPLETE SYSTEM OF WATERWORKS PER THE SPECIFICATIONS ALREADY ON FILE.¹⁰

ON JULY 4, 1894, A PETITION BY 50 VOTERS WAS SUBMITTED TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL FOR A SPECIAL ELECTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF VOTING BONDS TO THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000.00 FOR CONSTRUCTING

THE WATERWORKS.¹¹ WHILE NO DATE WAS FOUND FOR THE ACTUAL COMPLETION OF THE WORK, THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 1895 MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL INDICATED THAT THE BALANCE OF \$1,719.76 BE PAID TO U.S. WIND ENGINE AND PUMP CO. FOR THEIR WORK.¹²

V. WATERWORKS IMPROVEMENTS

AS THE VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON CONTINUED TO GROW, IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE ON THE ORIGINAL WATERWORKS. ON JULY 6, 1896 R. MORTON AND G.W. DUSTIN WERE APPOINTED BY THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO ERECT A PUMP HOUSE FOR THE VILLAGE WATERWORKS.¹³ N. PETERSON BUILT A CHIMNEY FOR THE PUMP HOUSE A SHORT TIME LATER FOR \$6.00.¹⁴ BY SEPTEMBER 1, 1898 JOHN MCCALL CONSTRUCTED WATERMAINS AND SEWERS FOR \$920.00.¹⁵ OTHER REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS WERE ALSO MADE TO THE WATERWORKS, INCLUDING THE WINDMILL, ALTHOUGH NOTHING SPECIFIC IS RECORDED.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS ALL WENT WELL UNTIL ON JULY 7, 1902 A PROPOSITION OF A.M. CLARK WAS MADE TO REMOVE THE WINDMILL AND WINDMILL TOWER FROM THE LARGE WATER TANK. THE COST FOR THE REMOVAL WAS \$60.00 AND WAS ACCEPTED BY THE VILLAGE COUNCIL. THE ONLY PROVISION WAS THAT THE WORK HAD TO BE

COMPLETED IN 30 DAYS.¹⁶ THE REASON THE WINDMILL WAS NO LONGER NEEDED CAME AS A RESULT OF THE NEW LIGHTING PLANT WHICH PROVIDED POWER FOR THE WATERWORKS.

VI. A NEW TOWER AND IMPROVEMENTS

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL WAS HELD ON MARCH 3, 1905. THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF RECONSTRUCTING AND REMOVING THE WATER TANK AND TOWER, PLUS EXPANDING THE WATERMAINS. NATURALLY, THE ISSUING OF BONDS TO FINANCE THIS WORK WERE ALSO DISCUSSED. IT WAS DECIDED THAT A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000.00 IN NEGOTIABLE BONDS WOULD BE ISSUED FOR THE PROJECT.¹⁷ ON MAY 11, 1905, A PLAN WAS ARRIVED AT TO "REMOVE THE VILLAGE PUBLIC WATERWORKS, TOWER AND TANK FROM LOT 13, BLOCK 8, IN SAID VILLAGE, AND TO REBUILD AND RECONSTRUCT AND FULLY EQUIP SAID VILLAGE WATER TOWER AND TANK NEAR THE VILLAGE WELL ON SO ½ OF BLOCK 12, LAMBERTON."¹⁸ WITH A SPECIAL ELECTION ON MAY 23, 1905, THE REMOVAL AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE WATER TOWER AND TANK WAS SET.¹⁹

SOMEONE STILL HAD TO BE FOUND TO DO THE WORK, SO BIDS WERE ASKED FOR REGARDING THE PROPOSED WORK. THOSE BIDS WERE

CONSIDERED ON JUNE 19, 1905 AT A SPECIAL MEETING. AT THAT TIME THE BID OF J.F. JOHNSON WAS ACCEPTED FOR THE BUILDING OF A NEW STEEL TANK AND TOWER FOR \$3150.00. IT WAS ALSO AGREE THAT J.F. JOHNSON WOULD RECEIVE ALL THE OLD MATERIAL FROM THE OLD TANK AND TOWER.²⁰ THIS MEANS THAT THE ORIGINAL WATERWORKS CONSTRUCTED BY U.S. WIND ENGINE AND PUMP CO. OF BATAVIA, ILLINOIS NO LONGER EXISTS IN LAMBERTON.

J.F. JOHNSON SUBMITTED A BOND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL IN THE SUM OF \$7,000.00 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW TANK AND WATERWORKS SYSTEM.²¹ THE WORK PROGRESSED AND WAS ALMOST COMPLETE BY SEPTEMBER OF 1906 BECAUSE A BILL WAS PRESENTED TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO PAY W.D. LOVELLA FOR "EXAMINING WATERTOWER AND EXPENSES" FOR \$25.05.²² AT THE OCTOBER 2, 1906 MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL, J.F. JOHNSON WAS PAID THE BALANCE DUE HIM OF \$600.00 ON THE EXTENSION OF THE WATERMAINS AND REBUILDING THE WATER TOWER.

VII. DESCRIPTION

THE PRESENT WATER TOWER IS A STEEL TRESTLE TOWER OF 90 FEET CONSTRUCTED OF TWELVE STEEL LARIMER COLUMNS ARRANGED IN A CRUCIFORM PLAN. STEEL CROSS MEMBERS FOLLOWING THE CRUCIFORM

PATTERN OF THE POSTS SERVE AS STIFFENERS AT FOUR DIFFERENT LOCATIONS ALONG THE POSTS. DIAGONAL TIE RODS PROVIDE ADDITIONAL STABILITY. THE POST FOUNDATIONS APPEARS TO BE LIMESTONE BLOCKS SET IN CONCRETE. THE STEEL TANK IS CYLINDRICAL IN SHAPE WITH A DIAMETER OF 20 FEET AND A HEIGHT OF 24 FEET. IT IS CONSTRUCTED OF FOUR ROWS OF SIX FOOT HIGH CURVED STEEL PANELS THAT ARE RIVETED TOGETHER. THE FLAT STEEL BOTTOM PANELS ARE ALSO RIVETED TOGETHER AND REST ON TEN STEEL GIRDERS AND FOUR CROSS MEMBERS WHICH FORM THE TOP OF THE TRESTLE SYSTEM. THE SIMPLE CONICAL STEEL ROOF CONTAINS AN ACCESS HATCH AND A GUARD RAIL AROUND ITS PERIMETER. THE NOMINAL CAPACITY OF THE TANK IS 55,000 GALLONS. A RISER PIPE ENTERS THE TANK THROUGH THE CENTER OF THE BOTTOM PLATES BETWEEN THE FOUR CENTER POSTS.²³

VIII. NEED FOR A NEW TOWER

IN THE LATE 1980'S LAMBERTON WAS HAVING MORE AND MORE PROBLEMS WITH CONTAMINATION OF THEIR WATER SUPPLY. AS REPORTED IN THE LAMBERTON NEWS, "LAMBERTON WAS AWARDED \$497,200 TO CONSTRUCT A NEW WELL AND WATER TOWER TO ASSIST IN ELIMINATING CONTAMINATION OF ITS WATER SUPPLY."²⁴

IT SEEMS THAT AFTER A NEW STATE MANDATED TESTING PROGRAM WENT INTO EFFECT SAMPLE INDICATED A RISING LEVEL OF A

CLEANINGSOLVENT. WHILE THE WATER TESTED AT THE WELL SITES AND PUMP HOUSE WAS HIGH, TESTING DONE WITH THE WATER IN THE GROUND STORAGE TANK WAS WELL BELOW THE MAXIMUM 5.0 CONTAMINATION LEVEL. BY THE TIME THE SOLATILE SOLVENT REACHED THIS POINT IT HAD EVAPORATED CAUSING THE LEVEL TO BE LOW. THIS MEANT THAT WHILE THE WATER REACHING THE COMMUNITY'S TAPS WAS SAFE TO DRINK, THERE WAS STILL TOO HIGH A LEVEL AT THE PUMP AND WELL SITES. THIS WAS THE PRIME REASON THE CITY OF LAMBERTON RECEIVED A GRANT TO DRILL NEW WELLS AND CONSTRUCT A NEW TOWER.

FOOTNOTES

¹M.N. BAKER, ED., THE MANUEL OF AMERICAN WATER-WORKS:
1897 (NEW YORK: ENGINEERING NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1897),
PASSIM.

²VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE RECORD BOOK,
JULY 7, 1887 - MARCH 6, 1896, MEETING OF 2 JULY 1890.
(HANDWRITTEN.)

³IBID., MEETING OF 3 APRIL 1893. (HANDWRITTEN.)

⁴IBID., MEETING OF 4 MAY 1893. (HANDWRITTEN.)

⁵IBID., MEETING OF 19 AUGUST 1893. (HANDWRITTEN.)

⁶IBID., MEETING OF 12 SEPTEMBER 1893. (HANDWRITTEN.)

⁷IBID., MEETING OF 6 NOVEMBER 1893. (HANDWRITTEN.)

- ⁸IBID., MEETING OF 22 MARCH 1894. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ⁹IBID., SPECIAL MEETING OF 16 APRIL 1894. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁰IBID., MEETING OF 20 JUNE 1894. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹¹IBID., MEETING OF 14 JULY 1894. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹²IBID., MEETING OF 1 APRIL 1895. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹³VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE RECORD BOOK, MARCH 19, 1896 - MARCH 8, 1900, MEETING OF 6 JULY 1896. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁴IBID., MEETING OF 2 NOVEMBER 1896. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁵IBID., MEETING OF 7 JULY 1898. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁶VILLAGE OF LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE RECORD BOOK, MARCH 24, 1900 - FEBRUARY 13, 1913, MEETING OF 7 JULY 1902. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁷IBID., SPECIAL MEETING OF 3 MARCH 1905. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁸IBID., MEETING OF 11 MAY 1905. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ¹⁹IBID., SPECIAL MEETING OF 23 MAY 1905. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ²⁰IBID., SPECIAL MEETING OF 19 JUNE 1905. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ²¹IBID., MEETING OF 4 SEPTEMBER 1905. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ²²IBID., MEETING OF 3 SEPTEMBER 1906. (HANDWRITTEN.)
- ²³CITY OF LAMBERTON MEMO, 9 DECEMBER 1993, STEVEN FLAIG.
- ²⁴LAMBERTON NEWS, 13 FEBRUARY 1991.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BAKER, M.N., ED. THE MANUEL OF AMERICAN WATER-WORKS: 1897.
ENGINEERING NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY, 1897.

LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE OF. VILLAGE RECORD BOOK,
JULY 7, 1887 - MARCH 6, 1896. (HANDWRITTEN, LOCATED
AT THE LAMBERTON COMMUNITY CENTER, LAMBERTON,
MINNESOTA.)

LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE OF. VILLAGE RECORD BOOK,
MARCH 19, 1896 - MARCH 8, 1900. (HANDWRITTEN, LOCATED
AT THE LAMBERTON COMMUNITY CENTER, LAMBERTON,
MINNESOTA.)

LAMBERTON (MINNESOTA), VILLAGE OF. VILLAGE RECORD BOOK,
MARCH 24, 1900 - FEBRUARY 13, 1913. (HANDWRITTEN,
LOCATED AT THE LAMBERTON COMMUNITY CENTER, LAMBERTON,
MINNESOTA.)

LAMBERTON NEWS (MINNESOTA), 13 FEBRUARY 1991.